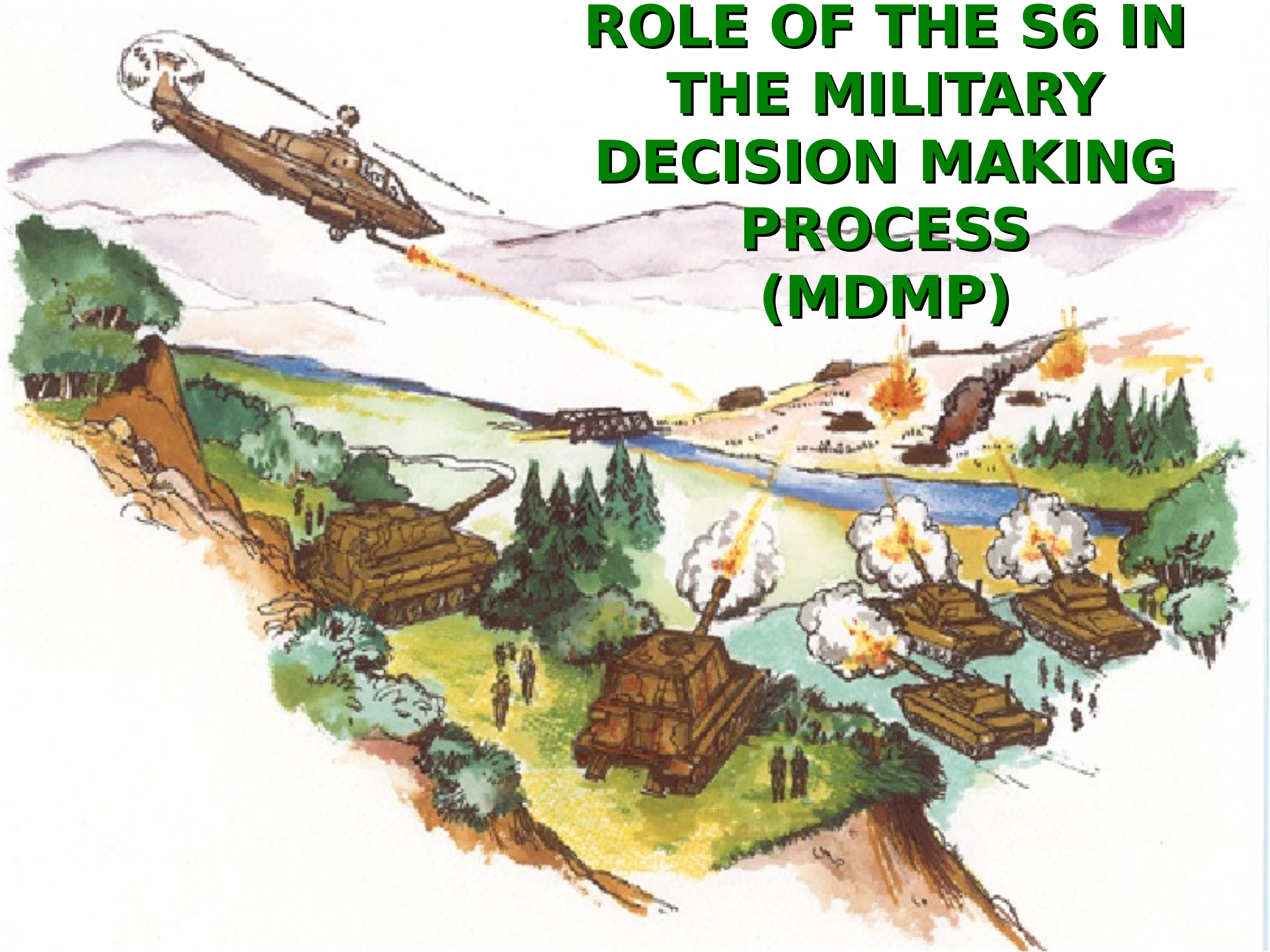
ROLE OF THE S6 IN THE MILITARY DECISION MAKING PROCESS (MDMP)



MDMP

STEPS	BRIEFINGS
1. Receive the Mission	
2. Mission Analysis	MA Briefing to CDR
3. Course of Action (COA) development	*COA Brief
4. COA Wargaming	*Wargame Briefing
5. COA Comparison	
6. COA Selection	Decision Brief to CDR
7. Prepare OPORD	OPORD Brief

*(Optional)

1. RECEIVE THE MISSION
1 of 4

The orders process begins with the receipt or anticipation of a new mission.

YOU SHOULD LOOK FOR...

- Map sheets of the area of operations
- Unit TACSOP/Higher HQs TACSOP
- Appropriate field manuals
- Signal Plans/Annexes of higher HQs

RECEIVE THE MISSION
2 of 4

The CDR performs an initial assessment that produces a planning timeline. This timeline then produces:

- Time available from mission receipt to execution
- Time allotted for planning and preparation
- Dates and times for briefings and rehearsals

1/3 - 2/3 RULE”

RECEIVE THE MISSION
3 of 4

S6 Actions (Step 1):

- Immediately gather materials needed to conduct MA from communications perspective
- Study the timeline, and prepare to be present for all staff processes and briefings
- Begin preparing (formally or informally) the signal estimate
- Issue warning order to communications section(s)
- Consult with next higher S6/G6
- Get a copy of signal battalion OPORD

RECEIVE THE MISSION
4 of 4

Signal Estimate

- Mission
- Situation and Considerations
  - **Characteristics of AO(Weather, terrain, other)**
  - **Enemy Forces(How effect your area)**
  - **Friendly Forces(How effect your area)**
- Analysis(each COA using eval criteria for +/-)
- Comparison (rank order with decision matrix)
- Recommendations (most supportable from Signal)
  - **Issues, deficiencies, and risks with recommend**

FM 101-5, pg C-3

2. MISSION ANALYSIS
1 of 3

This analysis begins with a thorough review of the order from higher HQ's.

THE STAFF WILL FORMALLY DETERMINE…

- Facts and Assumptions
- Specified Tasks
- Implied Tasks
- Essential Tasks
- Constraints (Must be done)
- Restraints (Can't be done)
- Risks

Mission Analysis Steps

1. Analyze the higher headquarters' order.
2. Conduct initial IPB.
3. Determine specified, implied & essential tasks.
4. Review available assets.
5. Determine constraints.
6. Identify critical facts and assumptions.
7. Conduct risk assessment.
8. Determine initial CCIR.
9. Determine initial recon annex.
10. Plan for available time.
11. Write the restated mission.
12. Conduct a mission analysis briefing.
13. Approve the restated mission.
14. Develop the initial commander's intent.
15. Issue the commander's guidance.
16. Issue a warning order.
17. Review facts &

FM 101-5, MAY 97, p. 5-10

Mission Analysis Products

- Modified Combined Obstacle Overlay (MCOO).
- Situation Templates (SITTEMP).
- Initial Event Template.
- Specified, Implied, and Essential Tasks List.
- Forces Available.
- Constraints.
- Facts and Assumptions.
- Risk Assessment.
- Initial Commander’s Critical Information Requirements (CCIR).
- Initial Reconnaissance and Surveillance Plan (R&S).
- Detailed Timeline.
- Restated Mission.
- Commander’s Intent.
- Commander’s Guidance.
- Warning Order (WARNO #2).

FM 101-5, MAY 97, pp. 5-10

Conduct an Initial Assessment

Mission Analysis Step 1

- Determine the time available from mission receipt to mission execution.
- Determine the time needed to plan, prepare for, and execute the mission for own and subordinate units.
- Determine the intelligence preparation of the battlefield.
- Additional factors to consider . . .
  - Ambient light requirements for planning, rehearsals, and movement.
  - The staff's experience, cohesiveness, and level of rest or stress.
- The critical product of this assessment is an initial allocation of available time.

FM 101-5, MAY 97, p. 5-4

Conduct Initial IPB

Mission Analysis Step 2

- IPB is the systematic, continuous process of analyzing the threat and the effects of the environment of the unit.
- Provides the basis for intelligence collection and synchronization to support COA development and analysis.
- Describes the environment your unit is operating in & determines the threat's likely COA.
- Helps the commander selectively apply and maximize his combat power at critical points in time and space.

IPB steps

- Define the battlefield environment
- Describe the battlefield's effects
- Evaluate the threat
- Determine threat COAs

FM 101-5, MAY 97, p. 5-6 & FM 34-130, JUL 94, p. 1-1

Determine Specified, Implied, and Essential Tasks

Mission Analysis Step 3

- **Specified tasks – those specifically assigned to a unit by its higher headquarters.**
- **Implied tasks - those that must be performed to accomplish a specified task, but which are not stated in the higher headquarters' order.**
- **Essential task(s) - must be executed to accomplish the mission (task and purpose).**

FM 101-5, MAY 97, pp. 5-6 to 5-7

Review Available Assets

Mission Analysis Step 4

- **Examine additions to and deletions from the current task organization, support relationships, and status of all units.**
- **Determine if assets are sufficient to perform all specified and implied tasks.**
- **Identify additional resources needed for mission success.**

FM 101-5, MAY 97, p. 5-7

Determine Constraints

Mission Analysis Step 5

- **Identify and understand constraints.**
- **Constraints take the form of requirements to do something or a prohibition on action.**

Identify Critical Facts and Assumptions

Mission Analysis Step 6

- **Facts are statements of known data concerning the situation including enemy and friendly dispositions, available troops, unit strengths, and material readiness.**
- **Assumptions are suppositions about the current or future situation that are assumed to be true in the absence of facts.**
  - They take the place of necessary, but unavailable facts.
  - An assumption is appropriate if it meets the tests of validity and necessity.
    - Validity means the assumption is likely to be true.
    - Necessity is whether or not the assumption is essential for planning.

FM 101-5, MAY 97, p. 5-7

Conduct Risk Assessment

Mission Analysis Step 7

- **When assessing the risk of hazards in operations, the commander and staff must look at two kinds of risk, *tactical risk* and *accident risk*.**
- **Tactical risk is risk associated with hazards that exist due to the presence of the enemy on the battlefield.**
- **Accident risk includes all operational risk considerations other than tactical risk, and can include activities associated with hazards concerning friendly personnel, equipment readiness, and environmental conditions.**
- **Risk management steps:**
- Identify hazards.
  - Assess hazards.
  - Develop controls, determine residual risk, and make risk decision.
  - Implement controls.

FM 101-5, MAY 97, pp. J-1 to J-3

Determine Initial CCIR

Mission Analysis Step 8

- **CCIR identify information needed by the commander to support his battlefield visualization and to make critical decisions.**
- **The commander alone decides what information is critical, based on his experience, the mission, and the higher's intent.**
- **CCIR directly affect the success or failure of the mission and they are time sensitive in that they drive decisions.**
- **CCIR normally expressed as PIR, FFIR, & EEFI.**

FM 101-5, MAY 97, pp. 5-7 to 5-8

Elements of CCIR

- **Priority intelligence requirement (PIR).**
  - Information about the enemy.
  - How I see the enemy.*
- **Friendly force information requirements (FFIR).**
  - Information about his or adjacent unit capabilities.
  - How I see myself.*
- **Essential elements of friendly information (EEFI).**
  - Information needed to protect friendly forces from the enemy's information gathering systems.
  - How I prevent the enemy from seeing me.*

FM 101-5, MAY 97, Pg. 5-68
* Battle Command Techniques and Procedures
Battle Command Battle Laboratory

Determine Initial Recon Annex

Mission Analysis Step 9

- **Identify gaps in the intelligence available and determine an initial reconnaissance and surveillance plan to acquire information based on available reconnaissance assets.**
- **Update CCIR and taskings to reconnaissance as they collect information and other intelligence sources fill in gaps.**

- **Initial reconnaissance annex should contain, as a minimum:**
  - **AO for reconnaissance.**
  - **Mission statement.**
  - **Task organization.**
  - **Reconnaissance objective.**
  - **PIR and IR.**
  - **LD/LC time.**
  - **Initial NAIs.**
  - **Routes to AO and passage of lines instructions.**
  - **Communications and logistics support.**
  - **Fire support measures**

Plan Use of Available Time

Mission Analysis Step 10

- **Refine the initial plan for the use of available time.**
- **Compare the time needed to accomplish essential tasks to the higher headquarters' time line to ensure mission accomplishment is possible in the allotted time.**
- **Compare the time line to the enemy time line developed during the IPB.**
- **Determine window of opportunity for exploitation or times when the unit will be at risk from enemy activity.**
- **Specify when and where for briefings and rehearsals.**
- **Maximize available planning time by sending**

Write the Restated Mission

Mission Analysis Step 11

- **Prepare a restated mission for the unit based on the mission analysis.**
- **The restated mission will include on-order missions; be-prepared missions will be in the concept of operation.**

FM 101-5, MAY 97, p. 5-8

Conduct a Mission Analysis Brief

Mission Analysis Step 12

- **Mission analysis is critical to ensure thorough understanding of the task and subsequent planning.**
- **Mission analysis briefing is given to both the commander and the staff to ensure tat all staff members are starting from a common reference point.**
- **This helps to commander and staff**

Mission Analysis Brief Outline

- **Mission and intent of HQs two levels up.**
- **Mission, intent, concept of operation, and deception plan/objective of the headquarters one level up.**
- **Review initial planning guidance.**
- **Initial IPB products.**
- **Specified, implied, and essential tasks.**
- **Constraints .**
- **Forces available.**
- **Hazards and their risk.**
- **Recommended initial CCIR.**
- **Recommended time line**

FM 101-5, MAY 97, pp. 5-8 to 5-9

Approve the Restated Mission

Mission Analysis Step 13

- **Immediately after the mission analysis briefing, the commander approves a restated mission.**
- **Can be the staff's recommended restated mission, a modified version of the staff's recommendation, or one that the commander has developed himself.**
- **Once approved, the restated mission becomes the unit's mission.**

FM 101-5, MAY 97, p. 5-8

Develop the CDR's Initial Intent

Mission Analysis Step 14

- **Commanders from company level up prepare an intent statement.**
- **Commander's intent is a clear concise statement of what the force must do to succeed with respect to the enemy and the terrain and to the desired end state.**
- **Intent provides the link between the mission and the concept of operation by stating key tasks that, along with the mission, are the basis for subordinates to exercise initiative when unanticipated opportunities arise or when the original concept of operation no longer applies.**

FM 101-5, MAY 97, p. 5-9

Issue the Commander's Guidance

Mission Analysis Step 15

- **If the commander has identified one or more decisive points, or an action he considers decisive, he should convey this to the staff.**
- **As a minimum, the commander's guidance should address . . .Specific enemy and friendly COAs to consider or not to consider, and the priority for addressing them.**
  - **CCIR.**
  - **Reconnaissance guidance.**
  - **Risk guidance.**
  - **Deception guidance.**
  - **Fire support guidance.**
  - **Mobility and countermobility guidance.**
  - **Security measures to be implemented.**
  - **Additional specific priorities for CS or CSS.**
  - **Any other information the commander wants the staff to consider.**
  - **Time plan.**

FM 101-5, MAY 97, p. 5-10

Issue a Warning Order

Mission Analysis Step 16

- **Immediately after the commander gives his guidance, the staff send subordinate and supporting units a warning order.**
- **As a minimum, the warning order contains . . .**
  - **Restated mission.**
  - **Commander's intent.**
  - **Unit's AO.**
  - **CCIR.**
  - **Risk guidance.**
  - **Reconnaissance to be initiated by subordinate units.**
  - **Security measures.**
  - **Deception guidance.**
  - **Mobility and countermobility guidance.**
  - **Specific priorities.**
  - **Time plan.**

FM 101-5, MAY 97, pp. 5-10 to 5-11

Review Facts and Assumptions

Mission Analysis Step 17

- **During the rest of the decision-making process, the commander and staff periodically review all available facts and assumptions.**
- **New facts may alter requirements and analysis of the mission.**
- **Assumptions may have become facts or may have become invalid.**
- **Whenever facts or assumptions change, the commander and staff must assess the impact of these changes on the plan and make the necessary adjustments.**

FM 101-5, MAY 97, p. 5-11

MISSION ANALYSIS
2 of 3

•The Mission Analysis step typically culminates in the Mission Analysis brief to the Commander.

- The final product of mission analysis is the restated mission
- After this process the commander will give his initial intent and planning guidance
- Mission Analysis, as performed by the S6 at this stage, should form the basis of the signal estimate

MISSION ANALYSIS
3 of 3

S6 Actions (Step 2):

- Complete, in as much detail as possible, the signal estimate
- Consider preliminary mission requirements for all communications systems (CNR, MSE, Data), and communications personnel within the unit
- Submit RFIs to higher for unanswered signal support issues

3. COA DEVELOPMENT
1 of 4

After receiving planning guidance, the staff will normally identify at least 3 courses of action that must meet the following criteria:

- Suitability - (Must accomplish the mission and comply with CDR's guidance)
- Feasibility - (Must have capability to accomplish mission with respect to time, resources and space)
- Acceptability - (The advantage gained by the COA must justify the cost in resources, to include casualties)

COA DEVELOPMENT
2 of 4

While assisting in the development of the COAs, the S6 must develop a clear concept of signal support for each COA.

- Distinguishability - (each COA must be significantly different than the others)
- Completeness - (Must be a complete mission statement)

COA DEVELOPMENT
3 of 4

S6 Actions (Step 3):

- Identify support concept for the scheme of maneuver to include primary and backup systems supporting critical C2 networks
- Establish plan for extending communications through each phase of the operation
- Signal support priorities

COA DEVELOPMENT
4 of 4

S6 Actions (Step 3):

- Recommend future CP (TOC/TAC) locations based on communications requirements and tactical situation
- Identify limitation of organic signal support assets
- Support tasks performed by non-signal units

4. COA ANALYSIS
1 of 5

Accomplished through "Wargaming"!

- The S3 will usually select the evaluation criteria by which the strengths/ weaknesses of the COA may be evaluated. These criteria might be principles of war, doctrinal fundamentals for the operation being conducted, or commander's guidance and intent.

COA ANALYSIS
2 of 5

Wargaming is the most important aspect of COA Analysis and should be allocated the most time.

- This analysis will usually begin with the forces in their respective staging areas and progress through movement and actions on the objective finishing with preparation of defense or counterattack.
- Staff officers will record the results from which to build task organizations, synchronize activity, and prepare plans and orders.

COA ANALYSIS
3 of 5

The recorder may use one of two methods to portray the results of wargaming:

- Synchronization Matrix – Allows the staff to synchronize the COA across time and space in relation to an enemy COA.
- Wargame Worksheet – Use brief notes concerning critical locations or tasks. Sequence numbers are used to reference the notes on the map.

(FM 101-5; fig 5-9 & 5-10)

COA ANALYSIS
4 of 5

Wargaming Steps

1. Gather the tools.
2. List all friendly forces.
3. List assumptions.
4. List known critical events and decision points.
5. Determine evaluation criteria.
6. Select the war-game technique.
7. Select a method to record and assess the results.
8. War game the battle and assess the results.

COA ANALYSIS
5 of 5

S6 Actions (Step 4):

- Continue to assess the feasibility, acceptability, and suitability of the COA
- Identify the C2 assets required to support the scheme of maneuver and the synchronization of the support and sustainment effort
- If requirements exceed assets, the S6 will recommend the priority of use based on commander's guidance and the situation
- Provide input for the C2 BOS

War gaming techniques

- **Belt Technique-** Simultaneous analysis along the width of the sector or zone, encompassing: rear, close and deep battles.

- **Avenue in depth-** One avenue of approach at a time starting with the main effort**.**

- **Box technique-** A micro analysis of critical areas and events, starting with the most critical event first**.**

5. COA COMPARISON
1 of 2

- Comparison of COAs begins with each staff officer analyzing an evaluating the advantages/ disadvantages of each COAs from his perspective.
- A decision matrix is most often used for comparison of COAs. The decision matrix compares the COAs against the evaluation criteria selected earlier.

COA COMPARISON
2 of 2

S6 Actions (Step 5):

- Identify communications advantages and/or disadvantages with respect to each course of action.
- Develop recommended solutions to communications disadvantages in COAs possessing them.

6. COA SELECTION
1 of 3

Normally presented to the Commander as part of the Decision Briefing.

THIS BRIEFING WOULD NORMALLY INCLUDE:

- Intent of higher HQs
- Restated Mission
- Own COAs
- Recommended COA
- Decision Matrix
- Recommended COA

COA SELECTION
2 of 3

- Evaluation criteria should be those identified during course of action analysis.
- Weighting - based on relative importance.
- Comparison methods - high/low, +/-, numerical value.

Criteria	Weight	COA 1	COA 2	COA 3
Time to Blocking Position	3	2 (6)	3 (9)	1 (3)
Risk of CATK to Right Flank	2	2 (4)	3 (6)	1 (2)
Size/Type of Reserve	1	1 (1)	3 (3)	2 (2)
Casualty Evacuation	1	3 (3)	1 (1)	2 (2)
Total		(14)	(19)	(09)

DECISION MATRIX

Recommend COA 3

NOTE: LOWER NUMBERS ARE BETTER

COA SELECTION
3 of 3

S6 Actions (Step 6):

- Brief the Commander on the C2 and signal support plan for each COA
- Be prepared to discuss advantages/ disadvantages of each plan with respect communications, and provide recommended solutions

7. PREPARE OPORD
1 of 3

- The Battalion S3 will produce the OPORD and the respective staffs will produce their annexes.
- In many units, the S6 is responsible for writing Paragraph 5 (Command & Signal) and subsequently briefing that paragraph during the OPORD Briefing.

PREPARE OPORD
2 of 3

PARAGRAPH 5: Command and Signal

a. Command. State the map coordinates for the CP locations and at least one future location for each command post. Identify chain of command if not addressed in unit SOPs.

b. Signal. List signal instructions not specified in unit SOPs; identify the specific SOI addition in effect, required reports and formats, and times the reports are submitted.

PREPARE OPORD
3 of 3

S6 Actions (Step 7):

- Complete detailed communications planning for the selected COA.
- Prepare (and brief) paragraph 5 (Command & Signal) of the OPORD, to include important signal information from the Signal Annex.

Summary of MDMP

STEPS

1. **Receive the Mission**
2. **Mission Analysis**
3. **Course of Action (COA) development**
4. **COA Wargaming**
5. **COA Comparison**
6. **COA Selection**
7. **Prepare OPORD**

***(Optional)**

BRIEFINGS

MA Briefing to CDR

*COA Brief

*Wargame Briefing

Decision Brief to CDR

OPORD Brief

CONCLUSION

This should be a refresher for the Military Decision Making Process. You should have learned how to apply it to a tactical scenario, but it can be used anywhere.